



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

CONSTRUCTIVE STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

By ERNEST D. BURTON and SHAILER MATHEWS,
The University of Chicago.

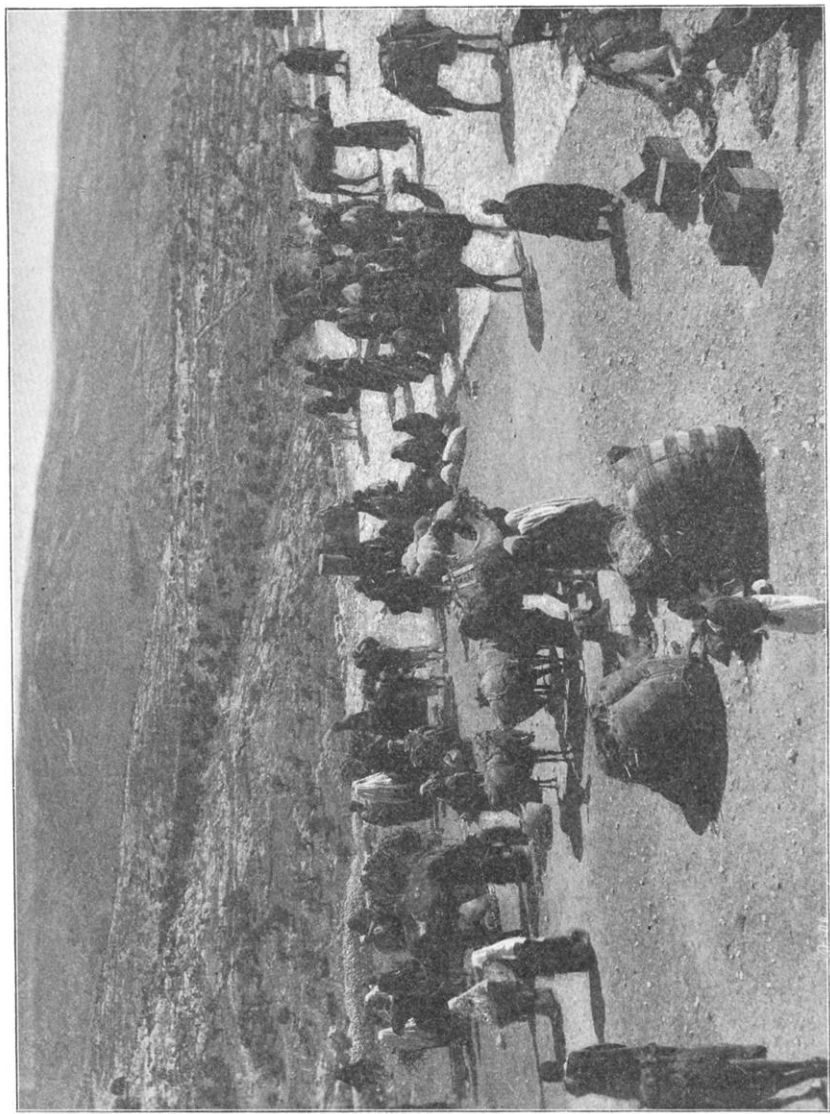
SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

WE beg leave to call the attention of teachers and pupils to certain features of the work.

1. It demands, first of all, *a mastery of the facts of the Scripture narrative*. The pupil is brought face to face with the gospels, which are the principal—almost the only—sources of knowledge for the life of Jesus that are now accessible to us. The first duty of an historian is the mastery of his sources. Nothing should be allowed to take the place of this, or to crowd it out. Whatever else a course of study based on this book may or may not accomplish, it will be largely a failure if the student fails to acquire as a permanent possession the gospel narrative of the life of Jesus.

2. It demands *interpretation of the Scripture material*; not, indeed, exhaustively thorough interpretation; time and space do not permit this; but such an interpretation as is needed for a reasonably thorough historical study. Let teacher and pupil deal with the material in an interpretative spirit, always asking as they study it: What is the actual meaning of this? For what thought in the mind of the writer or speaker did these words stand? What did he mean by them to convey to others? It is with the purpose of facilitating interpretation that most of the material contributed by us is inserted. Most of the remainder is intended to furnish historical data not derivable directly from the gospels, but needed for purposes of interpretation and historical construction.

It is mainly with the same end in view, and specifically in order to give definiteness to the student's work, that the Questions and Suggestions for Study are inserted. We regard the use of these questions (or better ones which the teacher may substitute) by pupils in studying and by teachers in teaching as almost indispensable to the successful employment of the plan of study which is here outlined. *Especially important is it that the questions marked with * shall be answered in writing*. We earnestly recommend that teachers who use the lessons receive the papers containing these answers from the pupils, correct



THE MARKETPLACE AT BETHLEHEM, LOOKING AWAY FROM THE TOWN

them carefully, and return them to the students. The reading of the answers in the class may or may not be wise.

3. The series is constructive in its aim, or, to speak more accurately, *it aims to encourage the student to do constructive work.* Out of the Scripture material, rightly interpreted, he is encouraged to construct for himself a "Life of Christ" which, though necessarily only a sketch or foundation, shall be, as far as it goes, true to the sources and the facts. It may be beyond the ability of some pupils to do this constructive work; others may, perhaps, be unable to give the necessary time; but, unless insuperable obstacles of this kind exist, this part of the work ought by no means to be neglected. Personal experience convinces us of the high utility of the method.

4. The book is not divided into lessons, but into chapters. The limits of these chapters have been determined, not by the amount of work which we suppose can be assigned for a lesson, but by the nature and relations of the material itself. There will be about forty chapters of not very unequal length. Teachers are advised to assign lessons according to their judgment of the ability of their pupils to do the work, always including with the paragraphs assigned for study the questions which pertain to them. Certain portions of the studies, usually so designated, the student should be expected to read, but not held responsible for reciting. Others, printed in fine type, are for the teacher rather than the pupil.

5. The book is intended to facilitate a thorough historical study of the life of Jesus, and through this it is our hope that it may contribute to the religious well-being of those who use it. Were it not for this hope, not one page of the studies would have been written. Recognizing that biblical study and instruction have their highest end in the cultivation and development of the moral and religious nature, and believing that the study of the life of Christ is in a preëminent degree useful for this purpose, we have taken up this work in the hope that through the use of it many young men and women "may believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God, and believing may have life in his name." But we have not for this reason felt it necessary to append to each chapter a list of religious lessons. The benefit to be gained from this study is not to be reaped at the end of each day's work. It will come through the larger knowledge of Jesus which the study will give, and the true fellowship with him to which such knowledge will lead those who have open minds and teachable spirits.

INTRODUCTION.

PALESTINE DURING THE LAST TWO CENTURIES BEFORE CHRIST.

REMARK.—This Introduction may be omitted by the younger of those pupils who use these studies, or assigned for reading only, according to the judgment of the teacher.

¶ I. **Judea before the Rise of the Maccabees.**—When Alexander the Great died, his vast empire was divided among his generals, and after years of fighting there finally emerged four strong kingdoms, or, as some call them, empires. Of these the two strongest were Egypt and Syria. Palestine lay between these two states, and as all the great roads ran through it, and as it was certain to be very important in the case of war, to say nothing about its tribute, each state endeavored to hold it. So Judea, a small part of Palestine, was thrown back and forth between them. It was altogether too small and weak to make any objection, and it paid its tribute of twenty talents to Egypt or Syria, as the circumstances demanded, or even divided it between them. At last, however, in 198 B. C., Antiochus III., the Great, finally got possession of the entire region, and Judea was firmly in the power of Syria.

At this time Judea seems to have had no army, no great wealth, a territory no larger than a fair-sized American county (since Galilee, Samaria, and the east-Jordan regions did not belong to it), and no city except Jerusalem. It not only centered about Jerusalem, but it might be said that Jerusalem was Judea, just as the Roman empire was once nothing but the city of Rome and the fields about it. Its very government was that of Jerusalem. For although the high priest was at the head of the state, he was assisted by the town council or senate of Jerusalem. Just how the members of this body—who were called elders or presbyters—were chosen we do not know, but very likely they were the heads of the most important families. This senate was the highest court, but it also made such laws as were needed; and, together with its presiding officer, the high priest, administered the government. By the time of Jesus this senate had lost some of its powers and had become somewhat different in character. It was then known as the Sanhedrin. Probably each village had also its local council and headman, but all important matters would be directed by the senate of Jerusalem. So it is clear that whatever history Judea should ever make would have to be centered around its sacred capital, where its high priest presided over the priests in the great temple and over the elders in the senate.

Now, this close union of religion and politics was to have very



COPYRIGHT BY THE BIBLE STUDY PUBLISHING CO.

important results. For if one were touched, the other would be, too, and if the Jews should be suspected of being untrue subjects of Syria, a part of their punishment would almost certainly fall upon their religion. And this is what actually happened. Antiochus Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus the Great, came to the throne of Syria in 175 B. C. Almost immediately he became involved in war with Egypt. He made expedition after expedition against that country, but each time was prevented by the interposition of the Romans or by some defeat from gaining a complete victory. In the course of these campaigns he became convinced that the most religious people among the Jews—the scribes and their disciples, or, as they were also called, *the Pious*—were more friendly to Egypt than they were to him. So he determined to punish them. He sacked Jerusalem, broke down its walls, and carried off all the sacred vessels from the temple. But this was not the worst. He determined to break down the Jewish religion, since he regarded it as the one thing that kept the Jews from becoming good subjects of Syria. Being a rash, impulsive man, he went about this work very savagely. A great many of the Jews, especially the priests and members of the rich families, had for a number of years been growing lax in their worship of Jehovah, and were beginning to live like the heathen. Now, Antiochus Epiphanes said, *all* Jews must give up Jehovah and their copies of the laws of Moses, and stop obeying them on penalty of death. He thought by destroying the Jewish religion he could make better citizens of the Jews. He sent out officers to see that the Jews obeyed him, and many of the party of the Pious were killed or forced to hide in caves in the mountains. The temple in Jerusalem was desecrated, and a pig was sacrificed to Zeus upon an altar built upon the great altar of burnt sacrifice.

¶ 2. **The Revolt of the Maccabees and the Pious.**—But other people than the Pious refused to join in this attempt to destroy Judaism, preferring death to heathenism. Among them was an old priest by the name of Mattathias, who, with his five sons, lived at a little town on the edge of the Judean hills, called Modein. When the king's officer came to Modein to make its citizens worship heathen gods, Mattathias killed him, and then fled with his sons and some of his friends to the mountains. There they were joined by bands of the Pious and other Jews, and began a revolt against the Syrians. Mattathias died in a few months, and his son, Judas Maccabæus, succeeded him as head of the movement. He was such a famous warrior that he gave his name (which means "hammer") to all those of his relatives who succeeded

him, although, more properly perhaps, instead of Maccabeans, they should be called the Asmoneans, after a distant ancestor.

Under the leadership of Judas (165-161 B. C.) the religious war resulted in a number of victories over the Syrian forces. Jerusalem was safely recovered—all except the citadel, which held a Syrian garrison—and the temple was reconsecrated with a great celebration in December, 165. Then came reverses, and for a short time the Pious separated from Judas, who wished to continue fighting, and accepted a high priest and a treaty offered them by Syria. But it was only a short time before they saw the need of further fighting, and Judas was again a popular and victorious leader, restoring order to the state and protecting the Jews throughout Palestine. The Syrians were again defeated during the absence of Antiochus in Persia, and it looked as if Judas might possibly lift his country into real independence, when he again lost the confidence of the Pious by making a treaty with Rome. When the Syrians came upon Judea in great force the small band which remained true to Judas was defeated, and he himself was killed in the battle of Alasa, 161 B. C.

¶ 3. **The Rise of the New Theocracy of Judea.**—But the death of Judas did not check the revolt headed by the sons of Mattathias. Jonathan (161-143 B. C.) took up the work, and by a series of fortunate battles and other circumstances got himself recognized by Syria as a sort of legalized outlaw chief, with headquarters at Michmash. From this camp he carried on a rough warfare against the Jews who sympathized with heathenism, and gradually became the most important man in the little country. But greater things were waiting for him. Each of two rival claimants for the Syrian throne, Alexander Balas and Demetrius I., wished his support and made him great promises. Jonathan sided with Alexander Balas, and was made high priest and military commander of Judea, his brother Simon being made military governor of the maritime plain. From this time Judea grew increasingly independent of Syria, for although Jonathan did not succeed in driving the Syrian garrison from the citadel in Jerusalem, the disorders in the Syrian empire enabled him to refuse to pay tribute and really to conduct the state according to his own plans. At the same time the Jews began to recover from their heathen sympathies, and to regard devotion to the law of Moses as of the utmost importance. When Jonathan was treacherously killed by one of the Syrian pretenders, his brother Simon (143-135 B. C.) succeeded him and reaped the advantages of his diplomacy and military skill. Under Simon Judea practically,

though not formally, threw off all allegiance to Syria. The Syrian garrison was forced to surrender the citadel in Jerusalem. The high-priesthood was made hereditary in Simon's family, coins were struck bearing his name, and legal documents were dated from his accession.

John Hyrcanus (135–105 B. C.) succeeded his father Simon, and under him the state reached its greatest prosperity. It included nearly all of Palestine except northern Galilee, it was an ally of Rome and Sparta, and John maintained a body of mercenary soldiers. We can see that it was becoming a monarchy, notwithstanding the fact that John Hyrcanus was high priest and was not called a king. Not all the leading men of Jerusalem approved of these changes, in which religion was being made subordinate to politics, and the most religious Jews, whose fathers and grandfathers had belonged to the party of the Pious, opposed the high priest. They were known as the Pharisees, or Separatists, because they wanted Judea to make no foreign alliances and to devote all its energies to keeping itself aloof from everything that was defiling, *i. e.*, not Jewish. At first John Hyrcanus sided with them, for they and their ancestors had always been the chief reliance of his house. After a few years, however, when he came to see how narrow they were, he changed to the Sadducees, or liberal party, whose fathers had been among those who had favored the introduction of Greek customs, but who themselves were not at all in favor of heathenism. They were not nearly as religious as the Pharisees, nor so devoted to the laws of Moses, but were more ready to fall in with John's projects. The Pharisees never forgave the Maccabean house for deserting them, and under the son of John Hyrcanus opposed the new order of things very fiercely. But it cannot be denied that the change at first was very beneficial to Judea.

¶ 4. **The Struggle of the Pharisees with Monarchy and the Sadducees.**

—When John Hyrcanus died there came to the throne his son Aristobulus, who conquered northern Galilee, and first of all his family called himself a king. But he reigned only a year (105–104 B. C.), and was followed by his most energetic but rough brother Alexander Jannæus (104–78 B. C.). He was a prodigious warrior, and seems to have cared very little that he was high priest as well as king. So obnoxious did he become to the Pharisees that they organized a revolt against him, and for several years Judea was swept by a desperate civil war, in which the Pharisees even brought in foreign troops to aid them. But Alexander at last conquered, and many of the Pharisees and their friends who did not flee to Egypt were executed. Thus monarchy was finally

established in place of a theocracy, and the Sadducees got possession of the high-priesthood as well as of the state. Alexander carried the boundaries of Judea almost as far as had the great Solomon, and probably during his reign the very interesting book of First Maccabees was written. At his death the kingdom was very prosperous, but his widow, Queen Alexandra (78-69 B. C.), who succeeded him, thought it best to look to the Pharisees for support, and thus the germs of civil war between them and the Sadducees were preserved. When she died, hostilities immediately broke out again. Her son, Hyrcanus II., was a Pharisee and really should have been king, but he was defeated by Aristobulus II., his Sadducean brother. Civil war raged for years, until at last both parties applied to the Roman general Pompey for his decision. He favored Hyrcanus II., but Aristobulus refused to abide by Pompey's decision, and so Judea was again involved in foreign war. Of course the Romans conquered, and in 63 B. C. Jerusalem was captured by Pompey, and the Jews became subject to Rome, and never again became independent except during the few months of the great rebellion, 66-70 A. D. Pompey made Hyrcanus II. high priest, but did not allow him to be king. In fact, most of the administration of the state was in the hands of a very keen, able man, Antipater, who was not a real Jew, but an Idumean, and who had been for some time the chief adviser of the weak Hyrcanus II.

¶ 5. **Herod the Great.**—This condition of affairs lasted for several years, Antipater being aided in the government by his two sons, Phasaël and Herod. The Jews, especially the members of the Sanhedrin, as the senate of Jerusalem was now called, hated Herod most heartily, since he was very severe in maintaining order in Galilee. But when Antipater was killed by a rival, it looked as if his sons might succeed him in the control of Hyrcanus II. and the state, but Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus II., invited the Parthians to come to aid him in getting possession of the throne he believed to be properly his. Phasaël was captured and committed suicide. Hyrcanus II. also was captured, and, after having his ears cut off, so that he could never again be high priest, was sent to Babylon, and Herod was forced to flee. He finally got to Rome, where Antony and Octavius had him appointed king of Judea, and he hurried back to win his kingdom. It was a long struggle he had with Antigonus, but at last he was victorious, and, having married Mariamme, one of the few remaining Maccabees, established himself as king over all Palestine.

Herod was an unscrupulous man, but for many years (37-4 B. C.)

he ruled Judea probably better than any of his successors. He maintained peace on the frontier and peace within his kingdom. His subjects seldom loved him, but they never rebelled against him. He was a great builder, not only of temples and colonnades in heathen cities, and public buildings at Jerusalem, but of entire cities as well. Chief among these latter was Cæsarea, which afterward became the Roman capital of Judea. In his treatment of the Jews themselves Herod mingled severity and generosity. He put down disorders very cruelly, but in time of famine he remitted taxes, and even sold his gold dishes to buy food for his people. The Pharisees did not like him, and among his last acts was an order to punish some of them terribly. He also deposed and appointed high priests in a most arbitrary way. Yet, in order to secure the good-will of the priests and the people at large, he rebuilt the temple with great magnificence, and surrounded it with huge pillars and marble courts. During the earlier and later years of his reign he was especially anxious about making his position as king secure, and executed every person he thought might prove a dangerous rival. Among his victims were Hyrcanus II., his own wife Mariamme, and her mother and brother, his own uncle, and three of his sons. When he died the people were ready for revolt, and begged Augustus not to appoint any more kings, but to let the government be what it had been so long before, a theocracy, with the high priest and the Sanhedrin at its head.

¶ 6. **Palestine after the Death of Herod I.**—But Augustus paid no attention to this request, and divided the kingdom of Herod, according to the king's will, between his three sons. Archelaus had Judea, Samaria, and Idumea, until he was removed for bad government in A. D. 6, when his territory was made into the Roman province of Judea. Herod Antipas had the tetrarchy of Galilee and Perea. Herod Philip had another tetrarchy composed of a number of small territories lying to the east of Galilee. These were the three political divisions of Palestine during all the lifetime of Jesus save the first few months.

¶ 7. **References for further Study.**

The greatest work is that of SCHÜRER, *The Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*, Pt. I, Vols. 1, ii. Smaller books are: WADDY-MOSS, *From Malachi to Matthew*; MATHEWS, *A History of New Testament Times in Palestine*; FAIRWEATHER, *From the Exile to the Advent*.

PART I.

THE THIRTY YEARS OF PRIVATE LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

THE SOURCES OF OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE LIFE OF JESUS: THE
ORIGIN AND PURPOSE OF THE GOSPELS.

¹ § 1. Prologue of John's Gospel.	John 1:1-18.
§ 2. Preface of Luke's Gospel.	Luke 1:1-4.

REMARK.—This chapter, dealing as it does with matter of great importance, but of some difficulty also, may wisely be omitted by the younger of those pupils for whom these studies are intended, or assigned for reading only. Here, as always, there is room for the exercise of the teacher's good judgment.

¶ 8. **Notes on § 1, John 1:1-18.**—These verses, commonly called the prologue of the gospel of John, are not, strictly speaking, a part of the gospel narrative of the life of Jesus on earth. They are an attempt of the evangelist to bring his own conception of Jesus into relation with certain ideas about the relation of God to the world which were current among some of those for whom he wrote his gospel. To many people of ancient times it seemed impossible to suppose that God could have anything directly to do with the world. Matter—the material of which the world is made—they thought was in itself evil, and, therefore, a good and perfect God could not have created it, and could not deal in any way directly with the world. But since it was necessary to suppose that all things came ultimately from God, they imagined that in creating the world and communicating with it God acted through an intermediate being or beings, though these were generally so vaguely conceived of that they could scarcely be called beings at all. For these beings one of the favorite names was “Word,” a word being that through which a being acts and makes himself known to others. But none of these beings, if indeed they could be called “beings,” were or could be definitely known. They were creations of the imagination, devised to bridge the gap between God and the world, including the world of men. In fact, however, instead of bringing God nearer to men, they only put him farther off.

To all such ideas the writer of this gospel was opposed. He believed in a God near at hand, who had always been revealing himself

¹ These section titles are, by permission of the publishers, Silver, Burdett & Co., reprinted from the *Harmony of the Gospels for Historical Study*, by WM. ARNOLD STEVENS and ERNEST DEWITT BURTON, Boston, 1894.

to men and who had now made the crowning revelation of himself through Jesus Christ. He would put no being between God and the world save the "Word," who did not by so much as one step remove God from the world, being himself a perfect and true expression of God, through whom God has come into real relation with the world, and through whom men could truly know God.

If these things are kept in mind as we read the evangelist's prologue, we shall see that he emphasizes especially these thoughts: The Word of God, he through whom God has expressed himself to the world, is one who perfectly reveals God; he was "in the beginning;" as far back as thought can go he was already there; existed, moreover, in "fellowship with God;" was himself "God." All things that are came into existence through him; he is the sole and only agent of creation; he has always been in the world, giving light to men; they have tried to shut out the light, but have never wholly succeeded; the light has gone on shining, giving light to every man that comes into the world, and life to all that receive him, who thus become sons of God. And now indeed he has become man, and we have seen his glory, revealing to us truly, as an only son reveals a father, the glorious nature of God.

Thus in place of a vague, obscurely conceived "Word," scarcely a being at all, and certainly wholly unknown, the evangelist puts the real historical person Jesus, affirms of him all, and more than all, that others had said of the imaginary "Word." In place of a series or group of such beings he puts the *one* "Word," himself God, who in Jesus Christ was become man.

The references to John the Baptist in vss. 7, 8, 15 are probably intended to correct or oppose the view held by some that John the Baptist was the real Messiah. The evangelist gives to John a place of high honor as a witness to the true light of the world, but denies that he was the light, and quotes the words of the Baptist himself to show that he regarded himself as inferior to Jesus.

These verses of the prologue are prefixed to the gospel somewhat as a modern writer puts a preface or an introduction to his book. They stand before and somewhat apart from the narrative of the book, and are designed, by the use of words which were familiar to those who would read the book, to set forth a true conception of Jesus as the one mediator between God and the world, the Word of God become flesh.

This prologue serves to illustrate one important fact about our

gospels, viz., that they were written to meet the needs of particular classes of people, and were shaped somewhat by this purpose.

We have in the four gospels four pictures of Jesus, differing from one another, partly because of the differences in the men who wrote the gospels, but not less because of the differing needs of the people for whom they were severally written. The better we understand for what readers each evangelist wrote, and what he wished by his gospel to do for them, the more perfectly can we understand their books and the Jesus of whom they write. See below, ¶¶ 10-13.

¶ 9. **Notes on Luke 1:1-4.**—These verses, commonly called the preface of Luke's gospel, should be read very attentively. They contain the only distinct statement by a gospel writer of the material which he had at his command, and the method in which he worked in producing his book. John 20:30, 31 is the only other passage in which a gospel writer states what his purpose in writing was. These verses (Luke 1:1-4) imply several facts of great interest: (*a*) When Luke wrote, there were already many other gospels in existence. (Of these no more than two at most, Matthew and Mark, are still in existence, and even Matthew may have been written later than Luke.) (*b*) These gospels were based upon the testimony which the personal companions of Jesus had borne (doubtless orally) concerning the deeds and words of Jesus; but those of which Luke speaks were written, not by these eyewitnesses themselves, but by those who had received their testimony. (*c*) Luke counts himself, not among the eyewitnesses, but among those to whom the eyewitnesses had reported the deeds and words of Jesus. He implies, therefore, that he wrote not from personal knowledge, but had at his disposal both the oral testimony of the eyewitnesses and numerous written gospels. (*d*) He had carefully studied out the whole history, that he might write down only what was true, and that in an orderly narrative. (*e*) Theophilus, for whom he wrote, had already been taught (orally) concerning these things. This was probably a custom of this time. (*f*) Luke's purpose in writing was to give to Theophilus—perhaps he had in mind many others situated as Theophilus was—a firm basis for historical knowledge concerning the life of Jesus.

It is clear, therefore, that when Luke wrote, a considerable time had elapsed since the life of Jesus—perhaps a generation, forty years or more; that in this time there had been considerable writing of gospels on the part of Christians; that our four gospels are the survivors of a larger number that once existed, but that much of that

which was contained in these early gospels has probably been taken up into the gospels we have, especially Luke's. It would be extremely interesting if we could now recover these oldest gospels, but it is possible that they would add but few to the facts about Jesus that we now possess in the gospels we have.

¶ 10. **The Gospel of Mark.**—The gospel which stands second in order in our Bibles is the shortest, the simplest, and probably also the oldest of the four. It has no prologue, like John's; no preface, like Luke's; no story of the infancy of Jesus, as have Matthew and Luke; but, after a very brief sketch of the work of John the Baptist, goes on to tell the story of Jesus' public ministry, dwelling here especially on his deeds and reporting his discourses much less fully than any of the other three. It is the majestic figure of Jesus, as he walked and worked and taught among men, that has impressed the writer, and it is this that he seeks to bring before his readers. "Power" has often been said—and justly—to be the keyword and thought of the gospel. Though undoubtedly written, like all the other gospels, to kindle or encourage faith, it does not do so by set argument, and even in aim it is less distinctly argumentative than the other gospels. What the writer knows of the life of Jesus he tells with simple directness, confident, apparently, that it cannot fail to make its own powerful impression. In its scope and in its conception of Jesus it reminds one of the words of Peter in Acts 1:21: "All the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out among us, beginning from the baptism of John unto the day that he was received up;" and in Acts 10:38: "Jesus of Nazareth, how that God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him."

The Mark to whom from early times the gospel has been ascribed is doubtless the John Mark mentioned in Acts 12:12, 25; 13:5, 13; 15:37, 39; Col. 4:10; Philem. 24; 1 Peter 5:13; 2 Tim. 4:11. Very ancient tradition affirms a connection of the apostle Peter with this gospel; and it is more than likely that Mark derived a considerable part of his material from what he had heard Peter tell concerning Jesus. How much Mark may have known of his own knowledge, or whether any of his material came from other sources, we cannot tell.

The gospel was probably written before, but not long before, 70 A. D.

¶ 11. **The Gospel of Matthew.**—Of all our four gospels Matthew has the most distinctly Jewish tone and color. Apart from any tradition

respecting its author, the gospel itself would show us that it was written by a Jew and for Jews. Notice its very first phrase, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham;" its frequent references to the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies (1:23; 2:6, 15, 17, 18, 23, etc.); its use of Jewish names, such as "the holy city" (4:5), "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (10:6; 15:24), and numerous other indications scattered through the gospel. It is evidently the purpose of the writer to confirm the faith of his fellow Jewish Christians in Jesus as the Messiah foretold in prophecy, and in particular to convince them that by the Jews' rejection of this Messiah, who came first of all to them, and, so far as his own work was concerned, to them alone, they had lost their place of preëminence in the kingdom, and the kingdom had become a kingdom for all nations, the old national limitations and the distinctive Jewish institutions being no longer in force. The true Jew must, accepting Jesus as Messiah, become a Christian, and take his place in the kingdom that was no longer exclusively Jewish. The book that begins strictly within the circle of Jewish thought, setting forth Jesus as the son of David and the Christ of prophecy, ends with the great commission of the Messiah, rejected by his own nation: "Go make disciples of all the nations."

Of Matthew the apostle the New Testament gives us very little account beyond the fact that he was a publican when Jesus called him to follow him (Matt. 9:9; 10:3). An early Christian writer tells us that "Matthew wrote the sayings [of the Lord] in Hebrew." But almost from the first Christians generally used not this Hebrew gospel, but the (Greek) gospel which we have today. Some scholars suppose that the Greek gospel was simply a translation of the Hebrew book, but others think—and this seems on the whole more probable—that the Hebrew book consisted mainly of the sayings or discourses of Jesus, and that the Greek gospel, our present Matthew, was, so to speak, a second and enlarged edition containing the contents of the original gospel, and also other material derived from sources such as those of which Luke speaks in his preface. The new book naturally retained the name of the old, and has borne that name from very early times till now.

Many of the narratives in Matthew are found in nearly the same words in Mark, though not infrequently the order of events is different in the two gospels. It is probable that in these cases the narrative in Matthew is derived from Mark, the change of order being usually due to a desire to bring the narratives into connection with teachings which

they illustrate, or to bring teachings on the same subject together. For this reason in studying the life of Christ we usually follow Mark's order in preference to Matthew's.

Our gospel of Matthew was probably published not many years after the gospel of Mark.

¶ 12. **The Gospel of Luke.**—The Luke whose name our third gospel bears is undoubtedly the beloved physician whom the apostle Paul mentions in Philem. 24; Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:11. These passages show him to have been a companion and fellow-worker of the apostle. If, as is generally believed, he was present wherever he uses the pronoun "we" in the Acts narrative, then Acts 16:10-40; 20:6; 21:17; chaps. 27, 28, also tell us of journeys which he took with the apostle.

The preface of Luke (see ¶ 9) prepares us not to expect a distinct argumentative purpose in his gospel, such as we find in Matthew. His aim was to tell as completely as the material accessible to him permitted the story of Jesus' life, and this that he might furnish to Christians trustworthy information concerning that life as a whole, rather than to prove any particular proposition concerning him. In both respects the book corresponds with this expectation. Like Mark in the absence of any specific argumentative purpose, it approaches more nearly to Matthew in its fulness of narrative, beginning with the story of the infancy and ending only with the ascension of Jesus.

Yet the gospel is not wholly without a distinctive character of its own. Emphasizing the *power* of Jesus less strongly than does Mark, it presents what may perhaps be called in a very broad sense the *social* side of his life and teachings more emphatically. The intimate relation of Jesus with mankind, in the family, in the Jewish church, and in the state; his subjection to the law, Jewish and Roman; his obedience to parents; his friendship for the publicans and sinners, for all however low or poor—these things appear in Luke as in no other gospel. In his teachings, too, as reported in the third gospel, he emphasizes the duty of men in their relation to one another, and the universality of these relationships. As he is the brother and Savior of all, so he teaches also that they are to be friends and helpers of one another, ignoring the lines that separate Jew from Gentile, Pharisee from publican, man from woman.

Among the gospels already in existence when Luke wrote (see ¶ 9) Mark's was doubtless one; as between Matthew and Mark, so also between Luke and Mark there are many parallels, *i. e.*, accounts of the same event in nearly the same words, and it is probable that in these

cases Luke as well as Matthew drew from Mark. Other sources Luke also had, but we cannot name them with certainty. They must have been in part the same as Matthew's, since in addition to the passages that are found in all three gospels there are a number which are found in Matthew and Luke, though not in Mark. He testifies that he scrutinized them all with care (1:3).

This gospel was probably put forth about the same time as Matthew's, say in the vicinity of 80 A. D.

¶ 13. **The Gospel of John.**—The prologue of this gospel (see ¶ 8) indicates that the author wished to oppose certain false ideas of God's relation to the world, and to maintain the uniqueness and all-sufficiency of the revelation of God in Christ. In John 20:31 we read: "But these are written that ye may believe [*i. e.*, continue to believe] that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye may have [*i. e.*, continue to have] life in his name." From these words it is evident that the gospel was written to maintain the faith of the readers in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, and so also their spiritual life in him. We judge, therefore, that those for whom the gospel was specially intended were in danger of being led away from faith in Christ by these false conceptions of God's relation to the world—conceptions which belittled the work of Christ as mediator between God and men, or excluded it altogether—and that the gospel was written to counteract their influence and maintain the faith of the disciples. This is confirmed also by the whole gospel, which, in chaps. 1-4, gives examples of the beginnings of faith in Jesus, and of unbelief; in chaps. 5-12 depicts the growth of faith and unbelief; in chaps. 13-17 shows the reward of faith in the fuller revelation of Jesus to his disciples; in chaps. 18, 19, the apparent triumph and dreadful culmination of unbelief in putting Jesus to death; and in chap. 20, the triumph of Jesus over death, justifying and confirming faith.

From the letters to the Colossians and Ephesians we know that ideas similar to those which are opposed in the prologue were prevalent in Asia Minor in the first Christian century, and that the tendency of them was to destroy faith in Jesus as the one all-sufficient mediator between God and man. See especially Col. 1:15-20; 2:8 ff., 16 ff. Quite likely, then, it was in this region, perhaps at Ephesus, that our gospel was written, and in all probability for Gentile Christians. It was quite certainly the latest of our gospels; it was probably written about 100 A. D.

The gospel has been from very early days attributed, rightly as we

believe, to John the apostle, son of Zebedee, so often referred to in the other gospels, though never mentioned by name in this one. The arrangement of the material as it now stands is perhaps due to some disciple or successor of John, but the material is, we are constrained to believe, in large part, if not entirely, from the hand of John; and in the absence of decisive evidence enabling us to put the events in an order which we can be sure is more nearly historical than that of the gospel itself, we shall treat the narratives in the order in which they stand.

¶ 14. **Other Sources for the Life of Jesus.**—In the study of the life of Jesus it is usual to depend almost entirely upon the four gospels, and this plan will be followed in the present study. But it is well to remember that there are other valuable sources, some of them older than our gospels. If all our four gospels had perished in the early centuries, and every quotation from them also, we should still know much about Jesus.

Non-Christian writers could tell us something. Josephus, the Jewish historian, mentions Jesus in one passage (*Ant.*, xx, 9, 1), and probably also in another (*Ant.*, xviii, 3, 3). Tacitus, the Roman historian, speaks of him in his *Annals* (xv, 44), as also Pliny in his *Letters* (x, 96), to which is to be added a possible reference in Suetonius (*Vita Claud.*, chap. xxv). The Talmud, the great Jewish law-book, repeatedly refers to Jesus under thinly veiled disguises.

The very existence of the Christian church and the records of its history attest the existence of Jesus, and bear important testimony as to his character, influence, and date. This most valuable testimony, often forgotten, is of the highest significance.

The epistles of the New Testament, especially the letters of Paul, bear very important testimony. A life of Jesus based on the epistles of Paul would be meager, indeed, compared with the gospel record, but, if we had not the gospels, would be of inestimable value. As matters are, the testimony of Paul has a peculiar value, because it comes directly from the pen of an apostle whose history gives it peculiar value, and because these letters are older than any of our gospels. From these writings alone we could learn the great capital facts respecting Jesus. Fortunately, however, we possess also the gospels with their much fuller accounts of his words and deeds.

¶ 15. **Questions and Suggestions for Study.**—(1) Read carefully John 1:1-18 and ¶ 8. Then (2) state to what general conception of the relation of God to the world this prologue is opposed.

(3) Describe some of the theories to which this conception gave rise. (4)* What are the main propositions of the prologue with which it opposes these theories? (5) What is the probable purpose of the references to John the Baptist in vss. 7, 8, 15? (6)* What relation does the prologue sustain to the rest of the gospel? (7) What fact respecting the origin of our gospels does it illustrate? (8) What great central and fundamental truths of Christianity does it set forth and emphasize? Name two or more of these, stating them with care.

(9) Read carefully Luke 1: 1-4 and ¶ 9; then (10)* state what these verses imply respecting early gospel writings and the method and purpose of Luke. (11) Of the many gospel writings here referred to how many still exist?

(12)* State the chief peculiarities of the gospel of Mark. (13) Give a short sketch of the life of Mark. (14) What relation did the apostle Peter probably have to this gospel? (15) What words of Peter in Acts appropriately describe Jesus as presented in this gospel? (16) When was this gospel written?

(17)* In what way does the gospel of Matthew indicate its Jewish character? (18)* What does the gospel itself show to have been the purpose of the evangelist in writing it? (19)* What conception of the kingdom of God and of Christianity does it aim to give to its readers, a narrowly Jewish conception or a broadly Christian one? (20) Of what did the original gospel of Matthew probably consist, and in what language was it written? (21) What is the probable relation of the gospel of Matthew to this original Hebrew gospel? (22) How does it happen that so many events are told in both Matthew and Mark in nearly the same words? (23) When was the gospel of Matthew published?

(24) Who was Luke the evangelist? (25)* What was his purpose in writing his gospel? (26) From what material was he able to draw, and how did he use this material? (27)* What phase of Jesus' life and teaching does he specially emphasize? (28) How does it happen that Mark and Luke have many narratives expressed in nearly the same words? (29) When was the gospel of Luke published?

(30)* In what words does the gospel of John state its own purpose? Explain the meaning of these words. (31)* What error is it intended to correct; what positive result does it aim to produce? (32) For whom was it specially written, and in what region? (33) From whom does this gospel take its name, and what was his relation to the gospel?

(34)* From what sources other than the four gospels can we derive information concerning the life of Jesus? (35)* Name three non-Christian writers who speak of him in their works. (36) How do the existence and records of the Christian church bear witness to his life? (37) What part of the New Testament outside the gospels contains the most valuable evidence? (38)* What gives peculiar value to the testimony of the epistles of Paul? (39) What facts of the life of Jesus are most frequently spoken of in the letters of Paul?

¶ 16. **Constructive Work.**—Let the student, having completed the study indicated in this chapter, write a chapter for his “Life of Christ,” on some such plan as the following:

CHAPTER I.

THE SOURCES OF OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE LIFE OF JESUS.

1. Jesus an historical person.
2. The various classes of books from which our knowledge of his life is derived.
3. How (in general) our gospels came to be written.
4. The gospel of Mark, its author, purpose, and general characteristics.
5. The gospel of Matthew.
6. The gospel of Luke.
7. The gospel of John.

¶ 17. **Supplementary Topics for Study.**

1. The sources of the life of Jesus (in general).

ANTHONY, *An Introduction to the Life of Jesus* (especially useful on the extra-biblical sources); GILBERT, *The Student's Life of Jesus*, pp. 13-78; SANDAY, art. “Jesus Christ” in HASTINGS, *A Dictionary of the Bible*; BURTON, in *BIBLICAL WORLD*, December, 1895.

2. The testimony of the epistles to the life of Jesus. A very instructive study may be made by reading through the epistles of Paul

and gathering all the references which he makes to the life of Jesus, and then arranging these so as to give his connected testimony.

KNOWLING, *Witness of the Epistles*; GILBERT, *Life of Jesus*, pp. 74-8.

3. The gospel of Matthew.

GLOAG, *Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels*; DODS, *Introduction to the New Testament*; BRUCE, in *Expositor's Greek Testament*; GODET, *The Collection of the Four Gospels, and the Gospel of Matthew*; BURTON, in BIBLICAL WORLD, January and February, 1898.

4. The gospel of Mark.

GLOAG, DODS, and BRUCE, as above; GOULD, Introduction in *Commentary on Mark*; SWETE, Introduction in *Commentary on Mark*.

5. The gospel of Luke.

GLOAG, DODS, and BRUCE, as above; PLUMMER, Introduction in *Commentary on Luke*; MATHEWS, in BIBLICAL WORLD, May and June, 1895.

6. The gospel of John.

GLOAG, *Introduction to the Johannine Writings*; WATKINS, art. "John, Gospel of," in SMITH, *Dictionary of the Bible*, 2d ed.; REYNOLDS, art. "John, Gospel of," in HASTINGS, *Dict. Bib.*; BURTON, in BIBLICAL WORLD, January and February, 1899; DODS, as above, and in *Expositor's Greek Testament*.

CHAPTER II.

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST AND OF JESUS.

§ 3. The two genealogies.

Matt. 1:1-17.

Luke 3:23-38.

§ 4. Birth of John the Baptist promised.

Luke 1:5-25.

§ 5. The annunciation to Mary.

Luke 1:26-38.

§ 6. The annunciation to Joseph.

Matt. 1:18-25.

§ 7. Mary's visit to Elizabeth.

Luke 1:39-56.

§ 8. Birth of John the Baptist.

Luke 1:57-80.

§ 9. Birth of Jesus the Christ.

[Matt. 1:18-25.]

Luke 2:1-7.

§10. The angels and the shepherds.

Luke 2:8-20.

¶ 18. Notes on §4, Luke 1:5-25.—Vs. 5, "Herod, king of Judea," viz., Herod the Great; cf. ¶5. "Of the course of Abijah": cf. 1 Chron. 23:6; 24:1, 10. Each course was on duty one week at a time, and since there were twenty-four courses, each served two weeks a year. See EDERSHEIM, *Temple*, pp. 63, 66. Vs. 9, "his lot was,"

rather, it fell to him by lot. The different duties of the worship were assigned by lot, and the burning of the incense was considered the most honorable part of the daily service. According to Edersheim, no priest could take this part a second time while there was another eligible one who had not performed it (EDERSHEIM, *Temple*, pp. 122, 133). Vs. 11, "on the right side of the altar of incense": in the holy place the altar stood just in front of the veil separating it from the Holy of Holies, the table for the shewbread being on the right-hand side, and the golden candlestick on the left. The position of the angel is therefore as if he had just come out of the Holy of Holies. Vs. 17, "in the spirit and power of Elijah," etc.: reproving the people for their sins, as Elijah had done. See Mal. 4:5, 6. Vs. 23, "departed unto his house." Cf. vss. 39, 40.

¶19. **Notes on §5, Luke 1:26-38.**—Vs. 26, "the angel Gabriel": cf. vs. 16. "Nazareth": see ¶21. Vs. 27, "of the house of David": most naturally understood to refer to Joseph. Vs. 32, "the Son of the Most High": on the meaning of this expression see ¶20.

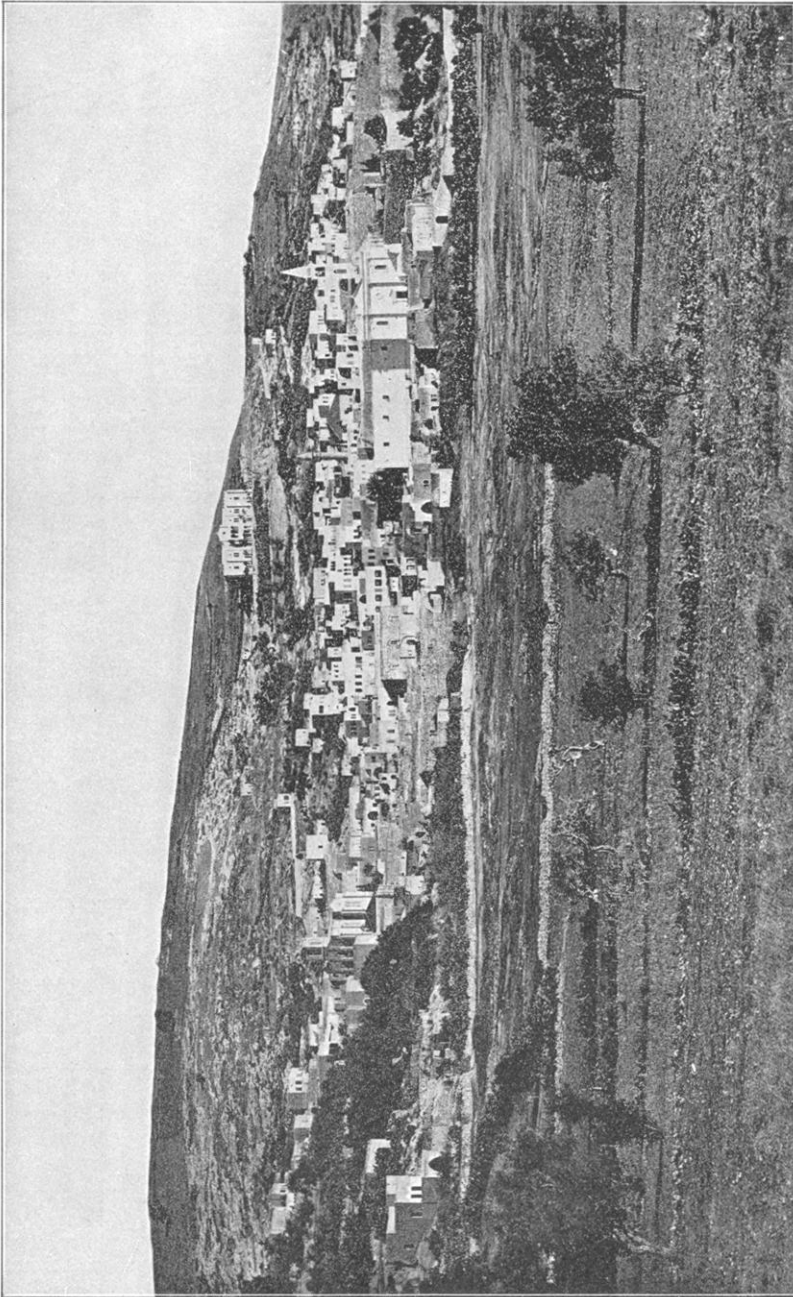
These verses (31-33) predict of Jesus those things which in 2 Sam. 7:14; 1 Chron. 17:13, 14; 22:10 are promised to the Son of David. They would naturally be understood at this time, before the Christ had come and fulfilled them in a more spiritual sense, as referring to a Jewish kingdom to be set up in Jerusalem with political as well as spiritual power. Compare with these words those of the Jewish hymn quoted below in ¶28.

Vs. 35, "The Holy Ghost," etc.—Observe the correspondence between the character of the power to which the birth of the child is due and that of the child himself. It is upon this that the emphasis of the sentence is thrown. On the meaning of "Son of God" see ¶20.

¶20. **The Term "Son of God."**—The expression "son of God" is used both in the Old Testament and in the New to describe a person or people as sustaining toward God some one or more of the relations which a son sustains to a father. "My Son," when the "my" refers to God, or Son of the Highest, have the same meaning. The particular filial relation which is emphasized may vary greatly. Thus one may be called son of God (1) as owing his existence directly to God (so probably in Luke 3:38); or (2) as superhuman and like God in nature (so of angels or the like in Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; and of men after the resurrection in Luke 20:36, and probably in this sense of Christ in Rom. 1:4); or (3) as like God in moral character (so of men in Matt. 5:9, 45; John 1:12; Rom. 8:29; by implication of Jesus in John 1:14; 14:7); or (4) as the object of God's special approving love or choice (as of

Israel in Exod. 4:22, 23; Deut. 14:1, 2; Hos. 11:1; of God's people, without restriction to Israel, in Rom. 9:26; 2 Cor. 6:18; Gal. 4:5; and of Jesus in Matt. 3:17; 4:3, 6; 11:27; 17:5, and the parallel passages in the other gospels; John 3:17); or (5) as being one who acts for God as a son for his father (so of the predicted son of David and king of Israel in 2 Sam. 7:14; 1 Chron. 17:13, 14; 22:10; Ps. 2:7; 89:20-37, with this sense the preceding one being usually blended). It is probably in this sense, and thus as nearly equivalent to the official term Messiah, that the expression is used of Jesus in Matt. 16:16; Mark 14:61. It is in this last-named sense that it is most natural to understand the expression "Son of the Most High" in vs. 32, the following clauses going on to speak of his receiving the throne of his father David and reigning over the house of Jacob forever. Cf. 2 Sam. 7:14; 1 Chron. 22:10. In vs. 35, on the other hand, "Son of God" emphasizes especially the fact that the child Jesus derives his existence not from a human father, but owes it directly to God (cf. 3:38); with this is associated also the idea of moral likeness to God, but this is expressed more by the word "holy" than by the term "Son of God."

¶21. **Nazareth.**—About opposite the southern end of the sea of Galilee the range of mountains that forms so large a part of western Palestine is deflected to the west, terminating in the abrupt mass of Carmel, and leaving in the general line of the range a considerable triangular plain—the famous plain of Jezreel or Esdraelon. Here more than one of Israel's great battles were fought. East of it lies Mt. Gilboa, where Saul was slain, and Little Hermon, on whose slopes lies Nain, the home of the widow whose son Jesus raised to life. Bounding the plain on the north is a range of hills, sometimes called the Nazareth range, crossing the main watershed nearly at right angle. The highest point of these hills is at Neby Sa'in, 1,602 feet above the sea. Between Neby Sa'in and the plain of Esdraelon, about two miles south of the former, is Jebel Kafsy, 1,280 feet above the sea level, nearly 1,000 feet above Esdraelon. Climb Kafsy from Esdraelon, and looking into and across the valley—more exactly it is a saucer-like basin—between Kafsy and Sa'in, you will see the village of *El-Nasira* on the southern slope of Sa'in, 450 feet below its peak. The town contains 7,000-8,000 inhabitants, and its very name identifies it as Nazareth, the home of Joseph and Mary. In the time of Jesus it was perhaps no larger than it is today, and possibly was not in quite the same location. Its noble spring, however, now known as the Virgin's Fountain, was unquestionably where it is today, and on the great hill that rises behind it Jesus may often have watched the ships on the Mediterranean, less than twenty miles away, and the caravans as they went along



NAZARETH

the great road a little to the east of the town, or on their way across Esdraelon to some seaport or Egypt. But Nazareth itself was never on any of the great trade routes and could never have been a town of great commercial importance.

See GEORGE ADAM SMITH, *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, pp. 432-5; PARKER, "A Reminiscence of Nazareth," in BIBLICAL WORLD, Vol. VII, p. 89; BAEDEKER, *Palestine and Syria*; EDERSHEIM, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Vol. I, pp. 144-8; ANDREWS, *Life of Our Lord*, pp. 104-8; MERRILL, *Galilee in the Time of Christ*, pp. 113-19; GEORGE ADAM SMITH, "Home of Our Lord's Childhood," in BIBLICAL WORLD, Vol. VIII, pp. 435 ff.

¶ 22. **Notes on § 6, Matt. 1:18-25.**—Vs. 19, "A righteous man and not willing to make her a public example": his righteousness would deter him, on the one side, from marrying her while suspicious of her character, and, on the other, from publicly disgracing her whom till now he had believed in as a pure and virtuous woman; hence he is disposed to adopt the middle course: to put her away, but not publicly. "Put her away," *i. e.*, divorce; among the Jews a betrothal could be broken only as a marriage could, by divorce. Divorce was a private matter between the two parties, although the separation would come to be known. Vs. 21, "for it is he that shall save his people": These words explain the name Jesus, which means "Savior;" "his people" would mean to Joseph the children of Israel. "From their sins": It is the sins of the people that have brought them into distress, and salvation, even political salvation, can come only through deliverance from their sins. Vs. 22, "Now all this is come to pass," etc. Matthew is specially interested in events which fulfil Old Testament prophecy. See 2:6, 15, 18, 23; 3:3; 4:15; 8:17; 21:4; 27:9. This dream-vision is the complement for Joseph of the appearance of the angel to Mary. Throughout Luke's narrative Mary's experiences are prominent; throughout Matthew's the experiences of Joseph.

¶ 23. **Notes on § 7, Luke 1:39-56.**—Vs. 39, "the hill country": *i. e.*, probably the mountainous region south of Jerusalem, in the vicinity of Hebron; the exact home of Zacharias is not known. Vss. 46-56. This psalm of Mary, commonly known from the first word of the Latin version as the "*Magnificat*," is expressed largely in the language of the Old Testament and moves largely in the atmosphere which characterizes the later Jewish psalm quoted in ¶ 28. It is the language of humble gratitude to God and of pious yet exultant joy in the thought of the heir of David's throne whose mother she was to be. The whole psalm is consonant with the situation and time

to which the evangelist ascribes it ; it is difficult to think of such a psalm as having been written after the Messiah had come and lived, not the life of a political deliverer, but of a teacher and suffering Savior rejected by Israel.

¶ 24. **Notes on § 8, Luke 1 : 57-80.**—Vs. 59, "On the eighth day" : *cf.* Gen. 17 : 12. Vss. 68-79. This prophetic psalm of Zacharias is, like that of Mary, permeated with the patriotic hope and joyful expectation of a son of David who should deliver Israel out of the hand of their enemies. As with the prophets of old, so here patriotism and religion are inseparably mingled. The hope and ideal of the aged priest for his nation are clearly seen in vss. 74, 75. Even more strongly than that of Mary it reminds us of the hopes cherished by the psalmist of fifty years earlier (¶ 28), and, like Mary's, agrees perfectly with the circumstances and occasion.

¶ 25. **Notes on § 9, Luke 2 : 1-7.**—On the questions of chronology raised by vss. 1, 2, see ¶ 31. Vs. 4, "Bethlehem," see ¶ 27. "He was of the house and family of David" : *cf.* on 1 : 27. Vs. 5, "who was betrothed to him" : this statement is somewhat different, but not materially so, from that of Matthew in 1 : 24, 25.

¶ 26. **Notes on § 10, Luke 2 : 8-20.**—Vs. 8, "shepherds . . . keeping watch by night over their flock" : This does not decide the time of the year. In a mild season and near the towns this might happen in any month. Vs. 9, "the glory of the Lord" : the brightness which is the token of the Lord's presence ; *cf.* Exod. 16 : 7 ; 24 : 17 ; Luke 9 : 31 ; Acts 9 : 3 ; 2 Cor. 3 : 18. Vs. 10, "to all the people" : *i. e.*, of Israel ; the message and the salvation are first of all to the chosen people. *Cf.* on Matt. 1 : 21. Vs. 11, "a Savior" : Recall the message of the angel to Mary, Luke 1 : 31, and to Joseph, Matt. 1 : 21. "Which is Christ the Lord" : see Acts 2 : 36, where Peter joins the same two titles. Precisely this phrase, however, occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It is found in the Jewish psalm quoted in ¶ 28, but is thought by some to be a mistranslation there for "the Lord's Anointed." Vs. 12, "and this shall be a sign to you," *i. e.*, by which you may know that my message is true. Vs. 14. The difference between the common and revised versions in this angelic song is due to a difference of one letter in the Greek manuscripts followed by the two versions. The revised version is almost certainly correct. The two lines are parallel in form ; "glory" corresponds to "peace," "to God," to "among men," etc. ; "in the highest," *i. e.*, in heaven, to

“on earth.” For the words “in whom he is well pleased” there is but one word in Greek, so that the two lines are nearly equal in length. The meaning is “men who are the objects of God’s gracious good pleasure.” Vs. 18, “And all that heard it wondered”: how widely they told the story is not said. The records of Jesus’ later life do not indicate that the testimony of the angels was at all widely remembered or known when thirty years later Jesus appeared as a public teacher. Vs. 19, “But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart”: the mother, however, did not forget them, but kept turning them over in mind. Here again Luke tells of Mary rather than Joseph.

¶ 27. **Bethlehem.**—Bethlehem may very well be called the “City of Children,” for, were it not for children, and, above all, the Child, it would hardly be remembered. The modern town, which still is known as Bêt Lahem, is beautifully situated, about five miles from Jerusalem, on the side and summit of a semi-circle of hills. All about it are olive



BETHLEHEM

groves and vineyards, pasture lands and grain fields. It is, indeed, as its name says, a “House of Food.” Today it has about eight thousand inhabitants, most of whom are Greek Christians, and contains several schools for boys and girls. Its most celebrated building is, of

course, the noble Church of the Nativity—or, more properly, of St. Mary—built over the cave in which tradition declares Jesus was born.

HENDERSON, *Palestine*, p. 149; GEORGE ADAM SMITH, *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, p. 318; BAEDEKER, *Palestine and Syria*, p. 121; MATHEWS, "Bethlehem, the City of Children," in *BIBLICAL WORLD*, Vol. X, p. 473.

¶ 28. **A Messianic Psalm of the Pharisees.**—With the words of the angel in Luke 1: 31–33, the psalm of Mary in 1: 46–55, the psalm of Zacharias, 1: 68–79, and the words of Simeon and Anna, Luke 2: 28–38, it is very interesting to compare those of a Jewish hymn written perhaps fifty years before the birth of John and of Jesus. We give the latter portion of this psalm in the English translation of Ryle and James (*Psalms of Solomon*, Ps. xvii, pp. 137–47).

Behold, O Lord, and raise up unto them their King, the son of David, in the time which thou, O God, knowest, that he may reign over Israel, thy servant; And gird him with strength, that he may break in pieces them that rule unjustly. Purge Jerusalem from the heathen that trample her down to destroy her, with wisdom and with righteousness.

He shall thrust out the sinners from the inheritance, utterly destroy the proud spirit of the sinners, and as potters' vessels with a rod of iron shall he break in pieces all their substance.

He shall destroy the ungodly nations with the word of his mouth, so that at his rebuke the nations may flee before him, and he shall convict the sinners in the thoughts of their hearts.

And he shall gather together a holy people whom he shall lead in righteousness; and shall judge the tribes of the people that hath been sanctified by the Lord his God.

And he shall not suffer iniquity to lodge in their midst; and none that knoweth wickedness shall dwell with them.

For he shall take knowledge of them, that they be all the sons of their God, and shall divide them upon the earth according to their tribes.

And the sojourner and the stranger shall dwell with them no more.

He shall judge the nations and the peoples with the wisdom of his righteousness. Selah.

And he shall possess the nations of the heathen to serve him beneath his yoke; and he shall glorify the Lord in a place to be seen of the whole earth.

And he shall purge Jerusalem and make it holy, even as it was in the days of old. So that the nations may come from the ends of the earth to see his glory, bringing as gifts her sons that had fainted,

And may see the glory of the Lord, wherewith God hath glorified her.

And a righteous King and taught of God is he that reigneth over them.

And there shall be no iniquity in his days in their midst, for all shall be holy, and their King is the Lord Messiah.

For he shall not put his trust in horse and rider and bow, nor shall he multiply unto himself gold and silver for war, nor by ships shall he gather confidence for the day of battle.

The Lord himself is his King, and the hope of him that is strong in the hope of God. And he shall have mercy upon all the nations that come before him in fear. For he shall smite the earth with the word of his mouth even for evermore.

He shall bless the people of the Lord with wisdom and gladness.

He himself also is pure from sin, so that he may rule a mighty people, and rebuke princes and overthrow sinners by the might of his word.

And he shall not faint all his days, because he leaneth upon his God; for God shall cause him to be mighty through the spirit of holiness and wise through the counsel of understanding with might and righteousness.

And the blessing of the Lord is with him in might, and his hope in the Lord shall not faint.

And who can stand up against him? he is mighty in his works and strong in the fear of God,

Tending the flock of the Lord with faith and righteousness, and he shall suffer none among them to faint in their pasture.

In holiness shall he lead them all, and there shall no pride be among them, that any should be oppressed.

This is the majesty of the King of Israel, which God hath appointed to raise him up over the house of Israel, to instruct him.

His words shall be purified above fine gold, yea, above the choicest gold.

In the congregations will he judge among the peoples, the tribes of them that have been sanctified.

His words shall be as the words of the holy ones in the midst of the peoples that have been sanctified.

Blessed are they that shall be born in those days to behold the blessing of Israel which God shall bring to pass in the gathering of the tribes.

May God hasten his mercy toward Israel! may he deliver us from the abomination of unhallowed adversaries!

The Lord, he is our King from henceforth and even for evermore.

¶ 29. **Jewish Family Life.**—It was into a Jewish home of the humbler sort that Jesus was born. Industry must have excluded bitter poverty, but the home of Joseph, the village carpenter, was not one of elegance or of wealth. It was none the less, in all probability, one of the happiest of the homes in that nation which presented the highest ideal of home life known among the ancients, an ideal scarcely surpassed in any age of the world.

Family life begins with marriage; but among the Jews betrothal was a matter of as much seriousness and solemnity as marriage itself. Even the property of the bride belonged to the husband from the time

of the betrothal, and they could be separated only by divorce, precisely as after marriage. The marriage was a festal occasion and included the removal of the bride to her husband's house.

The house in which the new family took up its abode would depend on the wealth of the husband, but among the humbler classes consisted of one or two square rooms on the ground floor, with a roof of straw and mud laid upon timbers or boughs. A flight of steps outside the house frequently led to the roof.

The furniture was of the simplest kind. Bedsteads were scarcely used at all; couches were found only in the houses of the wealthy. Sometimes there was a ledge on the side of the room, and on this, or on mats woven of palm leaves and laid upon the clay floor, the family slept, wrapped in their cloaks.

Pictures and statuary, being forbidden by the law (Exod. 20:4), would not be seen in a Jewish house at all. Books were rare and confined almost wholly to copies of the Scriptures.

The position of the wife and mother was an honorable one. In most homes there would be but one wife, though polygamy continued to some extent even down to and after New Testament times. Perhaps the saddest blot upon the family customs of the Jews was the laxity of their divorce customs, which permitted the husband to divorce his wife at will. Yet even in this there was a tendency toward a stricter practice in the teachings of one school of the scribes; and with this tendency the teaching of Jesus agreed, though striking at the root of the matter as neither school had done.

The love of children was always singularly strong among the Jews, and this both on the side of the father and of the mother. Law, narrative, and poetry all alike bear witness to this fact. See Lev. 26:9; 1 Sam. 1; Ps. 127:3; etc. Destruction of children, by exposure or otherwise, so terribly common among the Gentiles, was almost or wholly unknown among the Jews. As among the ancients and orientals generally, a boy was more highly esteemed than a girl, yet the depreciation of the daughter was only relative; both sons and daughters were desired and welcomed. In ancient times the boy was named at his birth, and, sometimes at least, by his mother (Gen. 29:32 and chap. 30), but in later times on the occasion of his circumcision (Luke 1:59; 2:21).

The law enjoined upon the parents the duty of instructing their children both in the history and in the religion of their nation—two things which were to the Jew almost inseparable (Deut. 4:9; 6:7, 20;

11:19). To the injunction of Deut. 6:6-9, and the similar words in Exod. 13:9, 16; Deut. 11:18, the Jew gave a very literal interpretation, fastening little boxes containing pieces of parchment, on which were written the words of Deut. 6:4-9, and 11:13-21, on his doorposts, and binding little leather-boxes containing Exod. 13:2-10; 11-17; Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-21 on his forehead and arms when he prayed. Yet, with a truer appreciation of the real sense of the injunction, he took great pains to teach his children the law, so that, as Josephus says, the people knew the statutes of the law better than their own names.

The care of the children fell in most cases directly upon the mother; nurses and other servants were found only in the wealthier families. Manual labor was never despised by a true Hebrew. Even the boy who was destined to be a scribe learned a trade. It was no reproach to Jesus that he was a carpenter.

It was in such a home, humble, pious, and, we may believe, happy, that Jesus lived with his brothers and sisters during the thirty years of his childhood and youth.

¶ 30. **The Religious Condition of Palestine in the Time of Christ.**—

There never was a more religious people than the Jews in the time of Christ. Ever since the return of a few thousand descendants of those who had been taken captive to Babylon, Jewish religious life had been growing constantly more intense. Even politics, it will be remembered, were largely determined by it. This religious development embraced the following elements:

a) *The ritual.*—Devotion to this feature of the Jewish religion naturally centered about the temple at Jerusalem. After the return from the exile this had been poor in its equipment, and during the Syrian period it had been desecrated and injured. Herod the Great, however, had thoroughly rebuilt it, surrounding it with noble colonnades and courts, each so strongly built as to be capable of long defense in case of a siege. The temple was served by priests, Levites, and various other classes of professional religious men. The worship did not consist in preaching, but in sacrifices, prayers, and music. Every year, also, there were a number of great feast days, on which, just as on our Easter, there were special services. The purpose of this ritual worship was not so much to instruct the worshipers as to aid them to religious aspirations and prayer, and so sacred was it that the thousands of Jews who came up to Jerusalem every year from all parts of the world to attend the feasts believed devoutly that Jehovah

could be worshiped by sacrifice nowhere else than in the temple. Every Jew was expected to contribute a small sum each year for the support of this worship, which constantly grew more elaborate. In the time of Jesus, it is true, ritualism had suffered somewhat from the rapid removal and appointment of high priests by Herod I. and later rulers, and there was some indignation that the priests living in Jerusalem had organized themselves into a sort of monopoly to control the immense supply of animals destined for the altar. But the temple worship still had control over the faith of the Jews, and even the Essenes, who did not approve of bloody sacrifices, sent gifts to the temple. Jesus himself attended the feasts, and offered the paschal lamb.

δ) *Legalism*.—By this is meant a tendency to reduce religion to a keeping of rules. It grew out of the great effort made by the Jews after the Return to apply the laws of Moses to every conceivable aspect and condition of life. The more religious Jews were so convinced God spoke through these laws that they could not believe righteousness could be gained except by obeying them. By the beginning of the first century before Christ there were seen three groups, or societies, who differed somewhat distinctly in their attitude toward this general principle and its application. (1) Two of these societies, the Pharisees and the Essenes, held very strongly to implicit obedience to the law. Each society numbered from four to six thousand members. They both resulted from the development through which the legalistic spirit had passed since Ezra established the study of the law as the great duty of religious persons. Yet the Pharisees and Essenes differed among themselves. The Pharisees, for instance, believed that men should observe, not merely the written law of Moses, but the "oral law" as well, that is, the ever-increasing mass of minute decisions made by the rabbis, or professional religious teachers, in their applications of the written law to every aspect of life. They also held strenuously to a belief in the resurrection of the body, and in a somewhat limited freedom of the will. But most of all did they wish the Jews as a nation and as individuals to be "separated" from everything that was not in accord with the Mosaic and the oral law. In fact, this gave them their name, for "Pharisee" means "separatist." In politics this principle made them averse to foreign alliances and monarchy, and in private life it made them punctilious about ceremonial washings and intercourse with humble persons and those who were thought to be sinful. The Essenes were, in some ways, even

stricter than the Pharisees. They did not believe in any degree of freedom of the will, and were so devoted to the principles of ceremonial purity that they became ascetic and communistic. They disapproved of marriage, and, in order to avoid any danger of defilement, organized themselves into monastic communities, living in cities or the country, membership in which was difficult to gain. Thus they withdrew from society, and so were of less influence than the Pharisees, who were the real leaders of the nation. Through them the general principle of legalism, that righteousness can be gained only by complete and absolute obedience to innumerable laws and rules, came to be generally accepted, and thus, practically, the entire Jewish nation was marked by an excessive conscientiousness and strictness.

(2) Over against the Pharisees and the Essenes were the Sadducees. They included the high priest and many priests, and so were in sympathy with ritualism rather than legalism. They would have nothing to do with the oral law of the Pharisees, and preferred to be less scrupulous and to live by the law of Moses itself. They were also believers in the complete freedom of the human will, but disbelieved in the resurrection of the body. They were in favor of greater liberty in life and of foreign alliances in politics. In a word, they were a political rather than a religious party, and throughout their history were opposed to the entire spirit of Pharisaism. Yet legalism grew constantly, and when Jerusalem fell it was ritualism that disappeared with the burning temple, while the study of the law continued for centuries, and is today the basis of orthodox Judaism.

In the time of Jesus legalism was a source both of strength and of weakness. On one hand it made men conscientious, excessively careful to obey God in every act of life. In this it was immeasurably superior to the heathenism of its day. On the other hand, however, it was almost certain to make its followers self-righteous, stern, fault-finding, and unloving. This was, of course, not true of all Jews, but it was a danger especially threatening the Pharisees, and one to which too many of them yielded. At the same time, it is easy to see how the necessity of knowing so many hundred rules before one could hope to be acceptable to God must have kept most men from ever expecting to gain righteousness. This led to two great evils: the scribes despised the masses who did not know these rules; and, also, finding it impossible for even themselves to keep all rules literally, they invented a great number of excuses for evading obedience. It was these two unworthy but inevitable elements of legalism, pride and hypocrisy, that

Jesus so severely attacked. It was to be his great office to show men that they can come to God even if they have not kept all the law and are conscious of their own sinfulness.

c) *The Messianic hope*.—This very important element in Jewish religious life in the time of Christ was the outgrowth of the third great element in the older Hebrew life, prophetism. It was the hope, especially felt by the Pharisees and their followers, that God would some day establish his all-powerful kingdom among the Jews, and that the whole world would be subject to Jerusalem, the capital of the Anointed of God, the Messiah. Day by day the Jews prayed for the coming of this kingdom and its King, and hoped that each day brought them nearer. But the description of this hope will be given later, ¶ 50.

¶ 31. **The Date of the Birth of Jesus**.—It is impossible to fix this date exactly because of the small amount of information at our command, but it lies within narrow limits. (1) Jesus must have been born before the death of Herod I., according to Matt. 2:1 and 19; that is, *before* March or April, 4 B. C. (2) Just how long before cannot be stated with precision, but certainly not more than two or three years, for he was “a young child” on his return from Egypt (Matt. 2:19, 20), and the age of the children Herod ordered killed (Matt. 2:16) must have been about that of Jesus at the time. We can safely say, therefore, that Jesus was born 6–4 B. C. This conclusion is confirmed by a comparison of Luke 3:23 and John 2:20, where the “forty-six years” bring us probably to 27 A. D. If about a year previously, when he began to preach, Jesus was about thirty years old, then clearly he must have been born about 4 or 5 B. C. But unfortunately we do not know *exactly* how near Jesus was to thirty years of age. Again, if we knew exactly when the census under Quirinius (or Cyrenius) was made, we should know when Jesus was born (Luke 2:1, 2), but the only census made by Quirinius that we know certainly about was in 6 A. D. It is possible, however, that Quirinius was legate to Syria twice. If so, his first term of office would probably have been about 9 B. C., since there is a break in the list of legates at that time. Recent investigations have also made it appear likely that a census was taken under Herod I. at about that date. But even if we should never know the precise day when Jesus was born, we know that he *was born*, and this is the one fact in which we are really interested.

¶ 32. **Questions and Suggestions for Study.**¹—(1) What are the most marked differences in the two genealogies? (2) Describe the special duty of Zacharias in the temple. (3)* Study the words of the angel to Mary and state what sort of person Mary's son was to be. (4) What did the Jews mean when they called one a son of God? (5) Describe Nazareth and study the picture to get the town's position among the hills. (6) What seems to have been the character of Joseph? (7)* Study the Song of Mary and state what sort of person Mary expected her son to be. (8)* Study the Song of Zacharias and state what he expected God would do for the Jews. (9) Does the term "son of David" refer to ancestry or to kingly office? See 2 Sam. 7:14. (10) Read carefully Luke 2:1-7 and state the reason why Joseph and Mary went to Judea, and determine whether or not they were poor. (11) Read Luke 2:8-14 and give some reasons why the birth of Jesus should have been a cause of great joy. (12) Did the people later seem to have known about the angel's visit to the shepherds? (13) Describe Bethlehem and give some incident connected with it, for instance the story of Ruth. See also 1 Sam. 16:4-13; 17:12-15; 2 Sam. 23:14-24. (14)* Describe the sort of home in which Jesus grew up. (15) What is meant by ritualism among the Jews? (16) What by legalism? (17) What parties were especially favorable to each? (18) What should you say was mostly wanting in the religion of the Jews in the time of Christ? (19) Was the religious life of the Jews higher than that of the Gentiles about them? (20) When was Jesus born? (21) How do you fix the approximate date?

¶ 33. **Constructive Work.**—Let the pupil write a chapter for his "Life of Christ" on some such plan as this:

CHAPTER II.

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST AND OF JESUS.

1. The story of the birth of John the Baptist.
2. The story of the birth of Jesus.
3. The Messiah expected by the people mentioned in these stories.

¹For younger classes, questions 7, 8, 15, 16, 17, 21 may be omitted if thought best by the teacher.

¶ 34. Supplementary Topics for Study.

1. The genealogies.

Articles in the Bible Dictionaries, especially those of SMITH and HASTINGS; ANDREWS, *Life of Our Lord*, pp. 62-8.

2. The Messianic hope as portrayed in the late Jewish psalm.

See ¶ 28. Brief quotations from other late Jewish literature are given by MATHEWS, "The Jewish Messianic Expectation in the Time of Jesus," in *BIBLICAL WORLD*, Vol. XII, pp. 437 ff.; in the same volume, GOODSPEED, "Israel's Messianic Hope," pp. 400 ff., and "Some Books on Messianic Prophecy," pp. 444 ff.



THE CHILD JESUS.—MURILLO
[From the painting "The Holy Family"]